

August 9, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PROJECT LOCATE CARDS HELP REMIND WIRELESS 9-1-1 USERS
THAT EMERGENCY CALLS MAY BE HANDLED DIFFERENTLY**

LINCOLN – Nebraska’s participation in Project Locate will help remind wireless communications users that their calls for emergency help may be handled differently depending on their location and the technology employed by the local public safety answering point (PSAP).

Commission Chairman Jerry Vap of McCook, who represents the Fifth District on the five-member Public Service Commission and serves as the Commission’s liaison with the E-9-1-1 advisory committee, said “Emergency callers from wireless telephones must be prepared to quickly give the operator an accurate description of the location from where the call is originating.”

Only about half of the state’s counties have implemented the first of two phases of E-9-1-1 technology that will eventually enable emergency operators to accurately and automatically identify the location of the caller requesting help.

The Public Service Commission has begun to distribute Project Locate cards to public safety answering points in Nebraska counties where Phase One E-9-1-1 has been implemented. The cards remind callers to identify the location of the emergency, to give the telephone number of the wireless telephone being used, and to accurately describe what has happened.

Project Locate cards also recommend learning the non-emergency numbers for public safety outlets, refraining from programming a wireless telephone to automatically dial 9-1-1 when one button is pressed and to lock the keypad when not in use to avoid accidental 9-1-1 calls.

Commissioner Vap said Project Locate has been organized nationally to help 9-1-1 callers understand how to use their wireless telephones effectively in summoning emergency assistance and reduce the amount of time needed to dispatch the appropriate service.

“Anyone wanting a Project Locate card may obtain one by contacting the public safety answering point in their county or by contacting the E-9-1-1 department of the Public Service Commission at 800-526-0017,” Vap said.

#

Following is the language found on the Project Locate cards:

Side 1:

Where is the Emergency? Use road name, number, direction of travel, mile markers, intersections, landmarks, etc.

What number are you calling from? Always give the area code, wireless phone number. If using a phone without a service contract and the call is disconnected, YOU must redial 911.

What exactly has happened? Clearly describe what has taken place. EX: What is on fire? Is the person conscious and breathing? Is the person visibly injured? Types and number of vehicles involved? If reporting a crime, vehicle & suspect descriptions are always important. Call 9-1-1 ONLY when an immediate response by police/fire-rescue/medical services is required.

Side 2:

Enhanced Wireless 9-1-1 Services can save lives, reduce pain and suffering as well as mitigate damage to property. You can help improve services and prompt responses by:

1. Learning the non-emergency telephone numbers in your area;
2. Not programming your cell phone to dial 9-1-1 on your cell phone;
3. Disabling the auto dial to 9-1-1 on your cell phone; and
4. Locking your keyboard when the phone is not in use to avoid accidental 9-1-1 calls, which can cause the unnecessary dispatch of services.

Since Enhanced 9-1-1 Service does not work everywhere in the U.S., BEFORE purchasing any phone or service ASK the wireless service provider what location technology they have in place to assist emergency services find YOU in times of real crisis. ASK your local 9-1-1 Center if they can receive and use your 9-1-1 call location.